

increasing the damping effect. Described in detail, an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A and an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B are initially uniformly kneaded or mixed together, such that the unvulcanized rubber material B is dispersed in the form of fine particles in the unvulcanized rubber material A. Then, the rubber material B is vulcanized, and the rubber material A is subsequently vulcanized, so that the vibration damping rubber member consisting of the vulcanized rubber materials A and B is formed. This is a major feature of the present invention.

In the Claims:

Please delete claims 1-10 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add new claims 11-25 as follows:

11. (New) A vibration damping rubber member having an island-sea structure in which fine particles of a vulcanized rubber material B which enables the vibration damping rubber member to have a high vibration damping effect are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of a vulcanized rubber material A that enables the vibration damping rubber member to exhibit a low degree of dynamic spring stiffness, characterized in that:

said rubber material A consists of NR or a mixture of NR and SBR, while said rubber material B consists of maleic acid-modified EPM, CSM, CPE, FR or acrylic rubber, and said vulcanized rubber material B functioning as said dispersed phase is formed by vulcanizing an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B while said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B is evenly mixed with and dispersed in an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A, and said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A is vulcanized while said vulcanized rubber material B is dispersed in said unvulcanized mass of said rubber material A.

12. (New) A vibration damping rubber member having an island-sea structure in which fine particles of a vulcanized rubber material B which enables the vibration damping rubber member to have a high vibration damping effect are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of a vulcanized rubber material A that enables the vibration damping rubber member to exhibit a low degree of dynamic spring stiffness, characterized in that:

said rubber material A consists of a mixture of NR and BR, while said rubber material B consists of halogenated IIR, maleic acid-modified EPM, CR, carboxyl-modified NBR, CSM, CPE, FR or acrylic rubber, and said vulcanized rubber material B functioning as said dispersed phase is formed by vulcanizing an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B while said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B is evenly mixed with and dispersed in an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A, and said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A is vulcanized while said vulcanized rubber material B is dispersed in said unvulcanized mass of said rubber material A.

13. (New) A vibration damping rubber member having an island-sea structure in which fine particles of a vulcanized rubber material B which enables the vibration damping rubber member to have a high vibration damping effect are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of a vulcanized rubber material A that enables the vibration damping rubber member to exhibit a low degree of dynamic spring stiffness, characterized in that:

said rubber material A consists of NR, while said rubber material B consists of halogenated IIR, and said vulcanized rubber material B functioning as said dispersed phase is formed by vulcanizing an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B while said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B is evenly mixed with and dispersed in an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A, and said unvulcanized mass of the rubber

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material A is vulcanized while said vulcanized rubber material B is dispersed in said unvulcanized mass of said rubber material A.

14. (New) A vibration damping rubber member according to claim 11, wherein said vulcanized rubber material B consists of fine particles which have an average size of 0.1-100 μ m and which are dispersed in said vulcanized rubber material A.

15. (New) A vibration damping rubber member having an island-sea structure in which fine particles of a vulcanized rubber material B which enables the vibration damping rubber member to have a high vibration damping effect are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of a vulcanized rubber material A that enables the vibration damping rubber member to exhibit a low degree of dynamic spring stiffness, characterized in that:

said rubber material A is a natural rubber, while said rubber material B is an acrylic rubber, and said rubber materials A and B are mixed together in a proportion of 90/10-60/40 by weight; and

said vulcanized rubber material B functioning as said dispersed phase is formed as fine particles having a size of 0.1-100 μ m, by vulcanizing an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B while said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material B is evenly mixed with and dispersed in an unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A, and said unvulcanized mass of the rubber material A is vulcanized while said vulcanized rubber material B is dispersed in said unvulcanized mass of said rubber material A.

16. (New) A process of producing a vibration damping rubber member, characterized by: evenly mixing together an unvulcanized rubber material A which enables the vibration

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damping rubber member to exhibit a low degree of dynamic spring stiffness, an unvulcanized rubber material B which enables the vibration damping rubber member to have a high vibration damping effect, and a vulcanizing agent capable of vulcanizing only said unvulcanized rubber material B; heating a mixture of said unvulcanized rubber materials A and B and said vulcanizing agent, to vulcanize said unvulcanized rubber material B such that fine particles of the vulcanized rubber material B are dispersed in said unvulcanized rubber material A; adding to said mixture a vulcanizing agent capable of vulcanizing said unvulcanized rubber material A; and forming a thus obtained mixture into a desired shape, and heating the formed mixture to vulcanize said unvulcanized rubber material A, for obtaining said vibration damping rubber member having an island-sea structure in which fine particles of the vulcanized rubber material B are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of the vulcanized rubber material A.

17. (New) A process according to claim 15, wherein said unvulcanized rubber material A is evenly mixed with the rubber material B to which said vulcanizing agent capable of vulcanizing only said unvulcanized rubber material has been mixed with said unvulcanized rubber material.

18. (New) A process according to claim 15, wherein said unvulcanized rubber material A is vulcanized by a sulfur-based vulcanizing system, while said unvulcanized rubber material B is vulcanized by a resin-based vulcanizing system, a metal-oxide-based vulcanizing system or an amine-based vulcanizing system.

19. (New) A process according to claim 16, wherein said unvulcanized rubber material A is vulcanized by a sulfur-based vulcanizing system, while said unvulcanized rubber material B is vulcanized by a resin-based vulcanizing system, a metal-oxide-based vulcanizing system or an amine-based vulcanizing system.

20. (New) A process of producing a vibration damping rubber member having a desired shape, and a low degree of dynamic/static ratio of spring constant and a high vibration damping effect, by vulcanizing and forming a rubber composition which includes a diene-based rubber material as a rubber component and which enables the vulcanized and formed rubber composition to have a loss factor $\tan\delta$ of at least 0.1, characterized in that:

a portion of said diene-based rubber material is replaced by not greater than 40% by weight of a rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type per 100% by weight of a total amount of these two rubber materials, and said two rubber materials and a vulcanizing agent capable of vulcanizing only said rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type are evenly mixed together to form a mixture, which is heated to vulcanize said rubber material such that fine particles of the vulcanized rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type are dispersed in said diene-based rubber material, and wherein a vulcanizing agent capable of vulcanizing said diene-based rubber material A is added to said mixture, and a thus obtained mixture is formed into a desired shape and heated to vulcanize said diene-based rubber material A, for obtaining said vibration damping rubber member such that the vibration damping rubber member has an island-sea structure in which fine particles of said rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type are dispersed as a dispersed phase in a matrix phase of said diene-based rubber material and which has said low degree of dynamic/static ratio of spring constant.

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21. (New) A process according to claim 18, wherein said rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type is halogenated IIR.

22. (New) A process according to claim 19, wherein said rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type is halogenated IIR.

23. (New) A process according to claim 18, wherein said vulcanized rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type is dispersed in the form of fine particles having an average size of 0.1-100 μ m in said vulcanized diene-based rubber material.

24. (New) A process according to claim 19, wherein said vulcanized rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type is dispersed in the form of fine particles having an average size of 0.1-100 μ m in said vulcanized diene-based rubber material.

25. (New) A process according to claim 20, wherein said vulcanized rubber material of functional group-vulcanization type is dispersed in the form of fine particles having an average size of 0.1-100 μ m in said vulcanized diene-based rubber material.

REMARKS

Prior to examination, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment in which the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(b)(1)(iii), a marked-up version showing the amendments thereto is attached. No new matter has been added. Applicants believe the case is now in condition for examination.